

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE**  
**ON TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023, 6.00 PM**

**Present:** Councillor Dempsey in the Chair  
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Ellis, Reeves, Scott, and Simcock  
  
Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C. Caddock  
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. H. Thomas  
  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Neil Griffiths – Cheshire Fire Service

**Apologies:** Councillors Evans (health) and Sheridan (work)  
PCSO Palfrey – Birchwood Police

**Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests**

The Chair reminded Members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest or prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when the item is reached.

*Councillor Reeves declared that he has now completed his term of office as a Governor at Birchwood Community High School. He will amend his Register of Interests accordingly.*

261/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey sent apologies for this meeting, but sent the following report for the period 28<sup>th</sup> November – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023:

*“Tru Cam has been deployed to areas around Birchwood, we have caught 6 drivers in the area highest being 39 MPH on Ordnance Avenue.*

**Anti-Social Behavior 0 reports**

*No reports in this time frame.*

**Burglary Dwelling 2 reports**

*1x Forbes Close- Caller reporting that someone has entered the address and stolen a handbag.*

**Burglary Others**

*N/A*

**Vehicle Crime / Offences – Reports**

*No reports in this time frame*

**Criminal Damage**

*1x Birchwood High School- fire was started at the school*

(b) **Presentation by the Cheshire Fire Authority re: Cheshire Fire Authority 2024 – 2028 Community Risk Management Plan Consultation**

The Chair welcomed Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Neil Griffiths, to the meeting and hand-outs for the presentation were given to Members.

Mr. Griffiths explained that the Fire Authority is now at the end of a twelve-to-thirteen-week consultation period and is looking for local Town and Parish Councils to feed back into the main consultation.

Mr. Griffiths stated that the biggest risk factors for fires are smoking, climate change, the ageing population and the rise of electric vehicles and their charging and storage in homes.

Mr. Griffiths said that the focus of his presentation would be the response proposal and mainly how it will affect Birchwood. He spoke in detail about the various proposals, especially the plan to reorganise daytime cover in Warrington, and to relocate a full-time fire engine from Birchwood to be used in Stockton Heath for four out of eight days, and explained the differences between a full-time and an on-call team.

Mr. Griffiths confirmed that Cheshire Fire Service will not be closing any fire stations, and will not be building any new ones, unless they are replacing an old building, and that this would be done within the current budget envelope that Cheshire Fire Service has.

Councillor Atkin asked if Cheshire Fire Service anticipates any issues recruiting and maintaining an on-call team. Mr. Griffiths responded that it is an issue they are familiar with as they often find it challenging to recruit on-call team members, but they plan to improve the reward and recognition programs which would make the job more desirable to recruits.

Councillor Ball asked if Cheshire Fire Service is aware of the response from the Fire Brigades' Union. Mr. Griffiths said that his understanding is they are not opposed to the proposed changes and understands Cheshire Fire Service's reasons for making them. He also said that the Union's priority is to see that its Members are protected. He stated that the Union has been invited to the 'Member's Planning Day' to formally respond to the consultation.

The Chair thanked Mr. Griffiths for his attendance and presentation, and Mr. Griffiths left the meeting.

The Chair asked if Members would like to make any comments regarding the consultation.

Members discussed the proposals and made the following points:

- One of the proposals set out in the CRMP is to reorganise daytime fire cover in Warrington, and to relocate a full-time fire engine from Birchwood to be used in Stockton Heath for four out of eight days, given the level of resource available. We have been assured that response time is still anticipated to be within 10 minutes and that we would still have the support of Warrington, Lymm and Stockton Heath Fire Stations when a full-time engine is not available in Birchwood.

- At the presentation, and in the CRMP document, it is highlighted that the proposed changes would see an increase in prevention and protection work such as ‘Safe and Well Visits’ and safety inspections. Birchwood Town Council see this as an added benefit to the local community.
- Councillors would appreciate assurances that the additional prevention and protection work will be carried out in all areas, including Birchwood.
- With the points noted above and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service’s operational constraints being considered, Birchwood Town Council does not have anything further to add.

**Action** Clerk’s office to draft a letter of BTC’s comments and send to Cheshire Fire Service for consideration as part of the CRMP consultation.

(c) **Public Participation**

There were no residents in attendance at the meeting.

262/23-24 **NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

- (a) Councillor Reeves **proposed**, Councillor Simcock **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
- (b) Following the conclusion of the meeting, Councillor Scott asked if two clarifications could be made to comments he had made at the November Meeting: That in minute 227/23-24 (b) paragraph 3, the phrase ‘rather than ‘simply’’ be replaced with ‘*as well as*’, and that paragraph 4 of minute 231/23-24 be reworded to state ‘*Councillor Scott confirmed that the recycling bins in Hamnett Court also tend to fill up very quickly between collections.*’

Members did not have any objections to the above clarifications, as they do not alter the content of the discussion. However, in order to adhere to Council procedures (as the meeting had been formally closed) the request for the clarifications needs to be formally considered and resolved at the January 2024 Meeting.

**Action:** To ask Council to approve the clarifications requested by Councillor Scott, as detailed above, at the January 2024 meeting.

**PROGRESS**

263/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

**Communication**

(a) **Heat Network Study**

The Clerk confirmed that a letter was sent on behalf of Birchwood Town Council, after resolution at the November meeting, to WBC’s Heat Network Study in support of its bid to the Department for Energy and Net Zero for grant funding.

(b) **Land to the Rear of Palliser Close**

The Clerk stated that since the last meeting, WBC has cut down the Hazel overgrowth on land to the rear of Palliser close.

(c) **Firmstep Issues**

A follow-up email was sent to WBC's Operations and Commercial Services Manager, and BTC's delegated WBC contact, with more evidential issues that BTC and residents have faced when trying to navigate the Firmstep program.

264/23-24 **MEMBER'S REFERRAL REGARDING WASTE BIN STORAGE AREAS ON CHATFIELD DRIVE ESTATE**

The Clerk stated that she has been in contact with YHG about a walkabout on the Chatfield Drive estate. It was agreed that the walkabout will take place on Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 11am.

**Action** Clerk's office to confirm with YHG.

**NEW ITEMS RAISED UNDER THE CLERK'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL**

265/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery/hedge issues (including ownership) etc.
- (b) Received – multiple Traffic Notices (published in the Warrington Guardian). There were several notices of interest to Birchwood, and all were forwarded onto Councillors and advertised on our Facebook page.
- (c) Received – query from a resident regarding land ownership of Birchwood Brook and if any maintenance would be undertaken. The resident was directed to WBC as we determined it was WBC owned land.
- (d) Received – email regarding weighbridge maintenance and servicing taking place on 19<sup>th</sup> December.
- (e) A resident has shared numerous emails (from 2017) regarding ongoing 'dangerous' flooding at the Locking Stumps Lane/Lords Lane junction. This matter has never been satisfactorily resolved.

The Clerk stated that she has brought this to the attention of our WBC designated contact, and she has shared emails and queries dating back to 2017.

BTC's Senior Maintenance Operative took photographs of the drains as they are this week and it appears they are completely silted up. WBC have said they have inspected the site and will put in a work order. No timeframe has been given.

Councillor Allen said that the gully opposite Mr. Dhillon's shop is full of leaves and has similar problems with drainage during heavy rainfall. The Clerk said she will add this to the WBC report to be looked at.

**Action** Clerk's office to add flooding opposite shop at Locking Stumps into latest WBC report.

266/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, trees blocking light from street lamps, etc.
- (b) Sent/received – multiple emails from a resident regarding excess flytipping around Redshank Lane. This has been followed up with YHG and they arranged for a large amount of the flytipping to be removed. The issue is still ongoing.

267/23-24 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES**

Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).

268/23-24 **CESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Speed Indicator Device (SID). To note that BTC's original, mobile Speed Indicator Device was delivered back to us today.
- (b) Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts

269/23-24 **CESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC), SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – NALC publications including the Chief Executive's Bulletins, events information, etc.
- (b) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, news items, etc

270/23-24 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

271/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

- (a) **Warrington Borough Council - Development Management Committee (DMC)**
  - (i) The December DMC meeting was held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023. There was nothing of specific relevance to Birchwood on the main agenda for discussion.
  - (ii) Information re: enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.
- (b) **Planning Decisions**
  - (i) **Application No. 2023/01268/PA14J** Caddick Construction, Ground Floor Chepstow House, Trident Business Park, Daten Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6BX. Installation of PV panels to roof of existing office building. **Prior Approval is Required and Granted.**

(c) **Planning Applications**

*All plans can be viewed via:*

[http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport\\_planning\\_and\\_environment/Planning/Se  
arch\\_planning\\_applications/](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport_planning_and_environment/Planning/Se<br/>arch_planning_applications/)

Certain applications are not Planning Applications; therefore, there is no statutory opportunity to allow 21 days for comments, e.g.: Non-material amendment applications, Lawful development certificates (S192) and 28 day prior approval/determination applications. These types of applications are received for information only.

- (i) **Application No. 2023/01470/NMA** Chadwick House, Warrington Road, Warrington, WA3 6AE. Non-Material Amendment to planning permission 2022/41880 to allow changes to external hardscape surfacing, concrete façade columns, and front elevation cladding removal.
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/01478/S106A** Land adjacent to Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge in full planning obligations dated 2 November 1992 related to application no. 92/28697, 29 November 1996 related to 96/34975 and 28 May 2008 related to 2006/08766 and the discharge of planning obligations insofar as they relate to the MSA Site dated 9 July 2003 related to A02/44982 and 24 June 2009 related to 2008/13753.

Councillors had no comments to make regarding the above applications.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 6.55 pm.**